



# 李戈：美猴王是我从小最喜欢的角色

Rodrigo: The Monkey King Has  
Been My Favorite Character Since  
I Was a Child

## Rodrigo: The Monkey King Has Been My Favorite Character Since I Was a Child

**Rodrigo Escobar-Vanegas, a former art teacher at the National University of Colombia, worked in drama stage design, artistic image creation, and scene and sound design for documentaries. In 2007, he moved to Beijing. After receiving a scholarship from the Chinese government, he began to study for a master's degree in film theory from the Department of Directing at the Beijing Film Academy. In 2010, he entered a photography class for further studies.**

Moving to China changed my life. I felt like I was reborn here: learning a new language, making new friends, adopting a new way of thinking. Every day, I learned something new and constantly felt that coming to China was my destiny. I came here to study and planned





to return to my hometown after graduation; however, every time I planned to return, something would make me stay. I can't stand against my fate. There is no end to learning here. The Chinese people are my teachers. Later, I got married to a girl from Chengdu, Sichuan Province, and my family grew bigger and bigger.

When my mother was young, she worked for the Colombia-China Friendship Association, which aims to strengthen the relationship with the Chinese people through cultural exchanges. That's why my mother visited China in 1979. Although I was little at that time, I remembered it clearly. I later had the opportunity to get close with members of the Acrobatic Troupe and Opera Troupe from Chengdu to Bogota, the capital city of Colombia. At that time, my friends regarded Superman, Batman, or Spiderman as their idols, while my idol was the Monkey King, who had amazing strength and skills. I like the Monkey King because it was the main character in my picture book *Journey to the West*. I read the Spanish version as I was little.

Surprisingly, the fabric of my life is woven through with many coincidences. In 2008, I moved to the place called Xiaoxitian in Beijing. This place name once appeared in a chapter of *Journey to the West* named "Monk Tang entered the false Xiaoxitian (minor Western Heaven), and Maitreya captured the Yellow-browed Monster by stratagem". I used to have a studio in the suburbs of Beijing. Coincidentally, it was located in a place called Peach Orchard Village, which looked like the place named the Peach Orchard where the Monkey King stole heavenly peaches. Having lived in China for so many years, I can tell you about many incredible things, including the places I have been to and the people I have met. Just like the



protagonist in *Journey to the West*, I overcame difficulties step-by-step and constantly learned from mistakes and bumpy roads.

I understand that as an artist and film director, my duty is to build a bridge to promote exchanges and mutual learning between Chinese and people of other countries. Due to this bridge, we can make more connections between Latin America and China, closing the distance a little every day. I no longer say which nation I came from. I am a citizen of the world.

### Link China:

#### *Journey to the West*

As one of four great classical novels of ancient China, *Journey to the West* mainly tells the story of Monk Tang and his three disciples, Monkey King, Pig, and Monk Sand, as they travel west in search of Buddhist Sutra through eighty-one hardships and finally arriving at their destination to obtain the Buddhist scriptures.



## Monkey King

Monkey King, one of the main characters in *Journey to the West*, was a stone monkey born from a magic stone. He is clever, naughty, rebellious, and eager to punish evildoers, but he is also loyal. He followed Master Puti and acquired a number of magical martial arts. The weapon he used was Will-following Golden Cudgel. Later, he worshipped Monk Tang as his master, and acted as bodyguard to subdue demons and monsters all the way to the Western Paradise. After overcoming eighty-one hardships, they finally retrieved the Buddhist scriptures and he was granted Buddhahood for his service and strength.



## —— 李戈：美猴王是我从小最喜欢的角色 ——

**李戈 (Rodrigo Escobar-Vanegas)：**曾任哥伦比亚国立大学艺术专业教师，从事过话剧舞台设计、艺术影像、纪录片影片场景设计和声音等创作。2007年定居北京，获得中国政府奖学金后在北京电影学院导演系取得电影理论硕士学位，2010年又进摄影师进修班学习摄影。

中国改变了我的生活，我在这里重生。学习一门新语言、交新朋友、运用新的逻辑，每天学习新东西，并不断发现来中国就是我的命运。我来中国读书，本打算毕业了以后回国，可是每次想离开时都会出现特别的情况让我继续留在这里。我无法对抗命运，中国不让我离开它。即使在这里学习也是无止境的，所有的中国人都是我的老师。同时我成为了成都女婿，我的家庭越来越大。

我妈妈年轻时在哥中友好协会工作，该组织希望通过文化交流加强与中国人民的友谊，1979年她就是这样来中国访问的——虽



然那时候我很小，但我依然清楚地记得。我也因此有机会近距离在哥伦比亚首都波哥大接触到来自成都的杂技团和歌剧团成员。我的小伙伴们将超人、蝙蝠侠或蜘蛛侠视为偶像，而我小时候的儿童书是《西游记》的漫画西语译本，我喜欢的是美猴王，他拥有更多惊人的力量和能力。

令人惊奇的是，生活有时候就是由神奇的事物编织而成的。2008年，我搬到了北京的小西天，这个名字曾出现在《西游记》里：“唐僧误闯小西天，弥勒智取黄眉怪”。以前我在北京的郊区有一个工作室，巧合的是地点位于一个叫桃林村的地方，看起来就



像蟠桃园美猴王吃仙桃的地方。在中国生活这么多年，我可以列举出许多令人难以置信的事情，去过的地方、遇见的人，自己仿佛和《西游记》里的主人公一样在一步一步地战斗，又从错误和艰险的道路中不断吸取教训。

我明白，作为一名艺术家和电影导演，我的职责是在不同文化的人之间架起情感的桥梁，而拉美和中国之间的距离也应该每天都在不断靠近。我不再说自己来自那里或这里，我就是世界公民。





## 链接中国

### 《西游记》

中国四大名著之一，主要讲述美猴王孙悟空和师弟猪八戒、沙和尚在保护师傅唐僧去西天求取佛经的路上历经九九八十一难，终于到达西天、取得真经的故事。

### 美猴王

《西游记》中的主要角色之一，从仙石中孕育而生的石猴。他聪明、调皮，嫉恶如仇，叛逆却又忠诚。他跟随菩提祖师练就了一身本领，武艺高强，勇敢过人，所使用的兵器是如意金箍棒。后来他拜唐僧为师，一路上降妖伏魔，历经八十一难，最后取回佛经，修成正果。

